



Board of Harbor Commissioners (BHC) Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, December 14, 2023 – 8:00am  
In-Person Meeting  
Port Milwaukee – 2323 S. Lincoln Memorial Drive  
Milwaukee, WI 53207

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**BOARD COMMISSIONERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Comms. Alderman Mark Borkowski, Claude Krawczyk, President (Pres.) Tim Hoelter, Craig Mastantuono, Vice President (VP) Ron San Felippo, Kathy Smith and Diane Diel.

Excused at 9:00am – (VP) Ron San Felippo and Kathy Smith

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Gregory Bird  
Zach Sadowski

**PORT MILWAUKEE STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

Maria Cartier – Market Development Manager  
Korey Garceau – Trade Development Representative  
Matt Gwiazdowski – Engineering Technician IV  
Peter Daniels – Civil Engineer III  
Eric Polzin – Port Operations Manager  
John Dermeyer Jr. – Port Facilities Supervisor  
Brian Kasprzyk – Chief Engineer  
Eddie Carter Jr. – Port Operations Technician  
Sean Hendley – Port Operations Technician  
Rich Watt – Port Finance & Administration Officer  
Selena Cole – Finance Specialist  
Jackie Q. Carter – Port Director  
Shauna Thompson – Administrative Assistant

**I. BHC Meeting Called to Order**

Pres. Tim Hoelter called the December 14, 2023 meeting to order at 8:00 am.

**II. ACTION ITEMS**

a) **Approve Thursday, October 12, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Presented by Pres. Tim Hoelter

Following consideration and discussion by the Commissioners, Kathy Smith motioned to approve the October 12, 2023 minutes was seconded by VP Ron Felippo and carried by the following vote:

**AYES:** All Commissioners

**NAYS:** None

b) **2024 BHC Meeting Calendar**

Comms. Kathy Smith made motion to approve and seconded by Claude Krawczyk  
Diane stated that she will miss the February 8, 2024 meeting due to travel.

**AYES:** All Commissioners

**NAYS:** None

c) **Approve 2024 Port Tariff**

Presented by Korey Garceau

Mr. Garceau discussed the overview of the proposed 2024 Port Tariff. Changes included verbiage and equipment updates. Dockage and wharfage rates were compared between Milwaukee and other Great Lakes ports. Labor rates were also reviewed following recent position reclassifications. An increase of 3% was recommended on most categories. It was also recommended that passenger wharfage be increased to \$10 per person, which remains lower than a majority of Great Lakes cruise ports. Recommendations also included adding a cargo removal clause for the City Heavy lift dock, requiring removal of any cargo within 30 days of offload from the vessel.

Following consideration and discussion by the Commissioners, VP San Felippo offered a motion to approve the 2024 Port Tariff recommendation, with a second by Commissioner Smith.

III. **PORT MILWAUKEE TRADE DEVELOPMENT REPORT – Maria Cartier**

Presented by Maria Cartier

Ms. Cartier gave the Trade Report, which included tonnage and public relations. The tonnage report is through October of 2023. Total Tonnage is up by 14%; where Municipal port tonnage is up 19%. The remainder of all cargos would include any private terminals. As we get into the month of January, our team will reach out to the other private terminals to get actual tonnage. Numbers are still ahead from last year. Dry Bulk is strong at 26% ahead of last year, with salt being a big contributor. Construction aggregates from Michel's had very strong growth. Michel's is doing a lot of work for Ports in the area. Liquid cargo is up by 28% while, Steel is down by 19%. Phase 2 for the DeLong terminal and the second PIDP grant award was mentioned, as well as the impact of the about the Seaway Strike.

There were 30 ship visits in 2023, with 28 being turnarounds. Mr. Garceau explained that turnarounds involve itineraries beginning or ending in Milwaukee. Passengers are taken on excursions to see the city before or after their cruise, and vessels refuel and take on supplies while in port. Many of the passengers who visit Milwaukee enjoy our city and give positive feedback. The first vessel visits of 2024 will be May 1<sup>st</sup>.

IV. **PORT MILWAUKEE OPERATIONS REPORT – Eric Polzin and John Dermeyer Jr.**

Presented by Eric Polzin and John Dermeyer Jr.

Mr. Polzin looked back at the full year in review of 2023. This data is very close to last year's numbers. Many of the ships/Vessels carried: Salt, Steel, Limestone, Cement/Asphalt and Bottom Ash. We also noticed an uptake on Cement/Asphalt in the last couple of months. Operations team leadership attended a one-day Vessel Maritime Security Training seminar. The training was an overview of the upcoming vessel traffic and information from the Coast Guard and rules pertaining to international waste/garbage.

Mr. Polzin also discussed need to remove a sunken vessel - small cabin cruiser. The rough estimate of the removal fee for this ship is \$3500.

Mr. Dermeyer gave an update on the Harbor Seagull. Plans are in place to continue working on the Seagull project by our team, with assistance of outside contractors. Pier Wisconsin has been winterized for the season. The Operations Team has assisted with river skimmer in the water to remove waste to help keep our rivers clean. Other winter projects for this team include equipment repair, cleaning and training. Operations is working with Finance & Administration to identify and schedule appropriate trainings.

**V. PORT MILWAUKEE ENGINEERING REPORT – Brian Kasprzyk**

Mr. Kasprzyk reported that current water levels are 4 inches above average. The 100-year history of lake level fluctuations were also presented to the Board. Our team plans to watch all weather reporting to be prepared in these winter months.

Area of Concern work continues. We Energies has completed the Third Ward of Milwaukee River cleanup. The work continues with the larger joint public project, being led by MMSD. Relocation of the combined sewer overflow has been on ongoing. This completion is expected to be done by Spring of 2024. Updates on the DMMF project were also provided. The contract for construction of the new facility is anticipated to be awarded early 2024.

Updates on the DeLong facility were provided including the completion of the additional rail and award of the PIDP grant for Phase 2 of the facility.

**VI. PORT MILWAUKEE FINANCIAL REPORT – Rich Watt**

Mr. Watt provided a financial update. Revenue is on track. Operating expenses are at 85%, but are expected to increase with yearend expenditures. Most accounts are current going into the new year. One new factor is the City is replacing their financial system within the next two years. Updating the system with all receivable accounts from the past 30 years to the present system. Overall, there are no concerns with the current budget

**VII. PORT MILWAUKEE DIRECTOR’S REPORT – Jackie Q. Carter**

The Port Director attended a number of port industry/partner events in the months of October and November. Great Lakes Governors & Premiers Leadership Seminar where Ms. Carter served on a panel on Great Lakes cruising. At the Highway H2O annual meeting, Ms. Carter served on a panel that focused business development opportunities in the maritime industry. Lastly, she attended the American Association Port Authority Annual Convention. The multi-day event included presentations on a number of different topics, including federal grants that could be leveraged.

The number of requests for the Port 101 presentations and tours continues to grow. Our team has been trying to engage with a more diverse audience and will continue to think strategically about how we engage underrepresented groups. Ms. Carter was invited to speak at Marquette Law School as part of their “Get to Know” series.

Port Managers and Ms. Carter met with the new USCG Sector Lake Michigan command staff. They discussed RNC. Our Port team will continue to host groups for 101's.

At the end of November, Port hosted U.S. Dept of Commerce Deputy Secretary Don Graves. Port hosted a forum with industry leaders to discuss agriculture exports using the DeLong facility.

Collaboration with City partners continues. Our team has been communicating with the City Emergency Management committee about RNC planning. Discussions around cyber security and physical security will continue. Both Mr. Polzin and Mr. Dermeyer Jr., will be involved once more detailed information is available.

Ms. Carter conducted one-on-one meetings with all Port Staff, providing the opportunity for unfiltered constructive feedback. The discussions were transparent and staff shared their ideas for improvements and future plans. Ms. Carter used the feedback to craft her MAPP Forward: Future Outlook (120 days, 4 months and 4 years) presentation to Mayor Johnson, which will be presented to the Mayor on Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> - all Port Staff have been invited to that meeting.

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

President Hoelter adjourn the meeting

Commr. Craig Mastantuono motion for adjournment was seconded by Diane Diel

Pres. Hoelter adjourned the December 14, 2023 Board of Harbor Commissioner's meeting at 9:10 a.m.